DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 328 394 RC 017 992

TITLE Meeting of National Specialists on the Conditions Governing the Schooling of the Children of Mobile Populations. Final Report (Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, France, September 11-15, 1989).

INSTITUTION United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).

PUB DATE Oct 89

NOTE 33p.; Appendix contain broken and faint type.

PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Demography; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Migrant Children; *Migrant Education; *Migrant Programs; Mobility; Nomads; Population Distribution; Student Mobility; *Transient Children

ABSTRACT

This report of proceedings summarizes a meeting held for facilitating the exchange of information between 27 educational specialists from 8 member states of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. These specialists held positions of responsibility in connection with the education of children belonging to families that, for occupational or socio-cultural reasons, were itinerant, or to children belonging to nomad population groups such as Gypsies, boatmen or bargemen, certain categories of seasonal workers, and other mobile population groups. The discussions covered several aspects of the problem of schooling the children belonging to these groups: (1) socio-cultural and socio-economic factors; (2) social and family structures; and (3) teaching methods and learning in conditions of mobility. This document summarizes the plenary session and the meetings of the French- and English-speaking groups. A list of suggestions for action and research are included. The Appendix contains a list of participants. (ALL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED328394

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Meeting of national specialists on the conditions governing the schooling of the children of mobile populations

Conflans-Sainte-Honorine (France), 11-15 September 1989

FINAL REPORT

October 1989

RC017992

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Zarattini

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Contents

Part I : Terms of reference

A. Objectives of the meeting (paras 1 - 2)

B. Scope and methods of work of the meeting (paras 3 - 6)

Part II : Minutes of the plenary session
(paras 7 - 28)

Part III : Minutes of the group discussions

A. French-speaking group (paras 29 - 52)

B. English-speaking group (paras 53 - 68)

Part IV : Evaluation of the meeting
(para 69)

Annex 1 : List of participants

Annex 2 : List of available documents

Annex 3 : Form of auto-evaluation

PART I : TERMS OF REFERENCE

A - OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

1. The meeting had a threefold objective :

- in the light of experiences under way, to effect an in-depth examination in this field so as, on the one hand, to obtain a clearer appreciation of the problem and the various national activities and, on the other, to encourage further initiatives;

- to put forward suggestions to promote the dissemination of initiatives in this field and to develop co-operation, more especially through the exchange of information and details of experiences and staff training in the various countries concerned;

- within the context of follow-up action, to encourage the presentation of experimental projects for submission to sources of extra-budgetary funding and/or suited to inter-agency activities within the framework of the United Nations as well as co-operation with NGOs and IGOs.

The groups concerned were the nomads and other itinerant populations such as the Gypsies, boatmen or bargemen, certain categories of seasonal workers and other mobile population groups which travel with their families and give rise to specific educational problems.

2. The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate exchanges of information between educational specialists from eight of Unesco's Member States who held positions of responsibility in connexion with the education of children belonging to families which, for occupational or socio-cultural reasons, were itinerant, or children belonging to nomad population groups. Such specialists were involved in or concerned with questions of schooling for one or another of these categories of children and with the identification of appropriate means for improving the education provided in the direction of greater relevance and higher quality.

B - SCOPE AND METHODS OF THE MEETING

3. The meeting was interdisciplinary in the sense that the discussions covered several aspects of the problem of schooling for children belonging to itinerant families or nomad population groups. Specifically, attention was paid to significant socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects which were linked to ways of life, social and family structures and interrelationships as well as to teaching-learning methods in conditions of mobility with a view to providing children with a functional preparation for active

life. Hence, the meeting may be seen in terms of the democratization of education which implies effective equality of opportunity for success, naturally beginning at primary level.

4. The meeting was essentially based on a comparison of data relating to national experiences in the schooling of the various categories of children from mobile families and on the personal experience of participants in this field. Due account was taken of the examples contained in the working document prepared by Unesco and the meeting further sought to clarify the concept of the educational needs of each of the learner categories concerned and also to identify the types and forms of teaching and learning best calculated to ensure the most harmonious possible development of such children's potentialities within the context of equal chances of success.

5. In the course of the meeting, particular stress was laid, firstly, on the need to bring about effective participation by families in the schooling of their children (which implies that the families should themselves be literate and prepared to assume their responsibilities in the matter) and, secondly, on the appropriate methods of teaching and learning having regard to the learners' situation and specific characteristics. To this end, the meeting reviewed possible solutions to the problems analysed and suggested follow-up activities, more especially the planning of pilot projects or experimental projects to be conducted with funds from extra-budgetary sources.

6. Twenty-seven participants attended the meeting, comprising representatives of seven African countries (Chad, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan, Mali), one Asian country (Mongolia), one American country (Peru) and three European countries (France, Hungary, Spain) together with representatives of the Council of Europe, European governments, Unesco and one NGO.

cf. Annex 1 : List of participants.

Annex 2 : List of available documents.

PART II : MINUTES OF THE PLENARY SESSION

7. The Chief Education Officer for the Department of Yvelines, M. Perret, welcomed the national education specialists and outlined the action undertaken in the Department on behalf of mobile population groups or those confronted with educational problems. Arrangements include three boarding establishments, reception classes and a network of medico-pedagogic assistance groups. Such action was designed to recentre the educational system on the children of mobile populations who ran the risk of being excluded from education.

8. Mrs. O. Vadot, member of the Yvelines regional council, likewise welcomed participants and expressed her best wishes for a successful meeting. She pointed out that all egalitarian systems tended to become quinegalitarian and that care must be taken to preserve the right to learning through a variety of adjustments, including the child's natural pace and adaptation to the specific characteristics of mobile populations. The municipality of Conflans was the European capital of inland water transport and hence particularly concerned with the problem of schooling for children in that sector and for Gypsies.

9. It was left to Mr. Brunswick, Secretary-General of the French Commission for Unesco, to place the seminar within the context of the questions arising and of the deadlines and prospects. He began by recalling the body of rights which children of "water-borne nomads" and "desert nomads" enjoyed in common with the rest of the population. These rights were proclaimed in 1789 and universally recognized in 1948; but in a world where lack of schooling was synonymous with social exclusion, it was vital that they should be effectively enjoyed through the provision of access to education. It was therefore appropriate that the meeting should take place within the framework of International Literacy Year and highly desirable that it should contribute to that Year through operational proposals to the Bangkok World Conference on Education for All with the aim of reducing illiteracy throughout the world.

10. The session concluded with an address by Mr. Koutcherenko, representing the Director-General of Unesco. He recalled Unesco's responsibility for defending and extending the right to education. To this end, it promoted the development of educational facilities for marginal and otherwise vulnerable population groups. Itinerant populations, however, could not benefit from such facilities despite their considerable numbers. These groups were little understood and were characterized by diversity, firmly-rooted traditions and specific relationships with sedentary groups. The present seminar was the first international meeting to be held on this topic and demonstrated the solidarity existing between nations and the Organization's fidelity to its ideals. Children's education should be seen in an overall context covering the instruction of parents and adolescents and adaptation to the

ethno-socio-economic environment. Hence, there was a dual principle to be respected, the effective involvement of families and due regard to the demands of the learners' environment.

11. Participants then proceeded to elect the meeting's officers. Mr. Mahamane (Niger) was elected chairman with Mr. Ezéomah (Nigeria) and Mr. Arzubialde (Spain) as vice-chairmen. Mr. Derycke (France) was chosen as rapporteur.

12. Mr. Pauvert, author of the working document prepared for the meeting, indicated the guidelines of his paper, more especially in order to make a concrete contribution to the Bangkok Conference. The primary aim was to answer the question of how solutions should be defined for the schooling of children in conjunction with the mobile populations themselves. Given the lack of reliable documentation, issues arising from this objective comprised four points, all of which called for a dialectic between a specific approach and universalization :

- knowledge of the populations concerned (identification, census taking, characteristics, movements, etc.);
- needs and demand for schooling among these populations, ranging from local demand to the definition of educational policy; need to solve methodological problems;
- transition from the identified need to the educational project and the definition of educational action : what methods should be used ? Need to allow for the integration of populations in the environment within the framework of a development strategy ensuring co-ordination of the various forms of action; such a framework should accordingly be subsumed by an economic project;
- proposals for regional and international co-operation leading to a country-by-country implementation of the projects, association of NGOs, promotion of exchanges of information and persons, obtention of funding.

13. Following on the statement by Mr. Pauvert, Mr. Tay (Unesco) set out expectations, embodying them in a single question : "Where do we stand ?". It was necessary to evaluate action already under way before preparing new projects. Information from various sources indicated that an explanation of the low school attendance rate among mobile populations should be sought in structural causes (logistics), in the failure to adapt teaching content to needs and to the environment, in the economic burden involved for families with uncertain incomes, and finally in the apprehension of cultural and socio-political assimilation. As a result, such families became "marginal" and conditions existed for ethnocide through certain forms of education. Information should accordingly be brought up to date and existing educational action evaluated so as to eliminate shortcomings and make it more efficient (boarding establishments, modernization to a greater or lesser degree of traditional schools, mobile schools, etc.).

14. Spain was affected by the problem of schooling for children of mobile populations, notably seasonal workers. These comprised both Gypsies and non-Gypsies and the most acute problems arose in connexion with the integration of the former. In the course of his statement, Mr. Arzubialde observed that, because of a deficiency in the law, the priority problem concerned the reception of families. Accordingly, educational action was undertaken in conjunction with social workers who reported on needs to the Ministry of Education which in turn took the necessary steps. There was a system of co-ordination between the provinces traversed by these groups so as to ensure continuity of schooling. Direct contacts existed between headmasters and two individual registers identified the child concerned by name. One of these was retained by the administration while the other was held by the family for stamping by the school authorities. Schooling was provided at gathering places during the agricultural season but although teachers received special training there was no intercultural element. Here again, social workers were responsible for providing encouragement and smoothing out difficulties which might rise to absenteeism. There was still a lack of evaluation in respect of such action and improved co-ordination would be desirable.

15. With regard to the schooling of nomad children, Mali, represented by Mr. Maiga, favoured a unitary approach so as to avoid discrimination. This approach was further sustained by a certain trend towards sedentarization following on drought. Curricula were the same for all as was the school enrolment age (7). Families were not consulted in respect of teaching content and teachers were required to serve anywhere in the country without distinction on account of ethnic origin. This policy had proved successful in that nomads were represented at all administrative levels but it had also met with setbacks because of the reservations felt by the nomad populations in the matter of schooling. This situation had been improved by a comparative "Islamization" of education but use of the vernacular language as a means of communication came up again a failure of understanding. Practical arrangements on behalf of nomads had consisted of fixed schools to board children, the cost being borne by pupils' parents and by the State. Nutritional problems, however, had become more acute because of the drought.

16. Mr. Ndung'u, representing Kenya, drew a distinction between the nomad pastoralists in that country and the Gypsies in Europe since the former were not excluded from society : on the contrary, they were represented at all levels. Nonetheless, there were major difficulties and the speaker concluded by asking : "What should be done ?". With a total population of 22 million, Kenya had 2.4 million nomads scattered over 72 per cent of its territory. These arid regions were only effectively opened to schooling in 1973 through various concerted actions. Three types of difficulty prevailed. The first arose from the lack of prospects for individuals having attended school and the importance of cyclical activities connected with stock-raising. The consequence was an unduly low level of motivation whereas the Koranic school satisfied families' requirements. The second difficulty was of a cultural nature : nomads preserved African values and identity which were threatened in the towns by Western culture and this led to a fear that children when educated would be "deculturized". The third

problem concerned the professional competence of teachers : foreign teachers were better trained but unwilling to accept the difficult living conditions while the training of local teachers was inadequate.

17. Thanks to the government livestock services, Niger, represented by Mr. Mahamane, possessed accurate data on the movement of nomad pastoralists. Out of 7 million inhabitants, 1.2 million were nomads or semi-nomads. Concern with this population was both political (national unity) and economic since agriculture and stock-breeding represented half of the G.I.P. School canteens had been instituted to encourage children's education but the difficulties were similar to those mentioned by the Kenyan representative. In the case of certain ethnic groups (in particular, the Bororos) it had been suggested that their intellectuals might play a more positive part in support of governmental initiatives among their people. More generally speaking, sensibilization activities among nomads involved the intervention of adults in the sedentary districts. In the face of these difficulties, the government initiated an educational development project in 1976, the School for Tamazalak Nomad Children. This comprised teaching in the nomadic language based on stock-breeding and gardening and preserved the component of specific cultural values and practices. The action in this regard met with parents' support. A 1983 evaluation showed that children's behaviour patterns (hygiène, protection of the environment) had improved but, in the absence of criteria adapted to specific skills, it was impossible to appraise the intellectual results. Unfortunately, the second phase of the project, concerning pre-school training, could not be implemented so that the gains had been jeopardized.

18. Mr. Ezéomah considered that the schooling of children of nomad pastoralists was progressing satisfactorily in Nigeria. Investments in the health and schooling of these population groups were justified by the dual contribution which they made to the national economy through taxes and the provision of proteins. Elements which contributed to this success were, firstly, the involvement of adults in the undertaking. Parents were kept informed of the practical value of the skills imparted to their children. Since Koranic teaching being esteemed, this was combined with Western instruction, the value of the latter being seen in connexion with newly-developed occupational constraints. Finally, as a matter of necessity, mobile schools had been established in which the local language was used by local teachers as the medium of instruction. By and large, decentralization was extensively employed : in order to reach the nomads they must be offered a wide range of possibilities. Various steps had also been taken to improve relations with the sedentary population and, more especially, with land-owners. Schooling had latterly been linked to adult instruction. In 1983, a fundamental research project was initiated which covered all aspects of the life of nomad populations. This enabled an effective policy on their behalf to be drawn up and the nation was already beginning to reap the benefits. The global political project consisted of making nomads good citizens contributing to the life of the nation while still preserving their identity and of enabling them to diversify their activities in accordance with economic development.

19. Mr. Taha indicated that the Sudanese government's action on behalf of school education did not include a component specifically intended for children of nomad pastoralists. There was a dual system in the country which was open to all : public schools provided standard instruction while simplified instruction was furnished in special single-teacher schools. The same pupil could follow one or the other course alternately although nomads almost unanimously opted for the latter. Since 1988, it had been decided to allow for the specific characteristics of nomads through a project co-funded by Unesco which recommended two types of school : a single-class, single-course school with a local teacher and, where there was a shortage of water, boarding schools. New syllabuses were also to be determined.

20. Mr. El Waled next described the situation in Mauritania. There were two types of nomad populations : pastoralists and farmers. The latter were catered for in the "adwaba" schools but specific difficulties arose in respect of the pastoralists who were widely scattered since they travelled as isolated families and were suspicious of any contact with the authorities. The problems which confronted the schooling of their children were therefore all but insurmountable. Teacher training was similarly handicapped by the considerable linguistic diversity and the varying skills required for different types of stock-breeding. A partial remedy could be found in the Koranic schools which offered literacy training and traditional education : the problem was to persuade teachers in the "mahadra" to co-operate in communicating modern knowledge and skills. The existing network of such schools offered the possibility of covering virtually the whole country and, if so recommended, a pupil could continue his education in one school after the other. A further advantage of the system lay in the flexibility of adaptation to seasonal activities.

21. Discussing the situation in Chad, Mr. Mahamat stressed the non-governmental contribution made to the schooling of nomad children. Leading citizens and parents' associations had supported the establishment of experimental schools with money and material. It was now a matter of urgency to train teachers. Mr. Mahamat pointed to an interesting innovation which consisted of instituting three nomad schools on an experimental basis although there were difficulties of a material and financial kind.

22. The schooling of Gypsy children in France was described by the Vice-Chairman of the Association for the help of Gypsy children and other youth in difficulties (ASET), Mr. Cote. Gypsies in France numbered between 300 and 400,000. They were currently confronted with a problem arising from the lack of stopping-places. In a number of municipalities, moreover, the steadily increasing demand for schooling encountered various difficulties. The most vulnerable age group was between 13 and 20 since members of this group were illiterate and hence deprived of access to public schools. It had therefore been necessary to introduce mobile units providing appropriate instruction at unauthorized stopping-places for those without access to public schooling. Teachers were volunteers from staff of the national education system. The intelligence and motivation displayed by those concerned to some extent offset the paucity of resources. Such action was based on respect for traditions and was proving successful.

23. A consultant with the Commission of the European Communities and the Council of Europe, Mr. Liégeois, stressed the need to encourage the exchange of experiences so as to economize in respect of resources while at the same time warning against the direct transfer of these. With respect to the schooling of Gypsy children, the European institutions had been concerned with the training of teachers and with evaluations of innovative action so as to improve reception conditions. An important step forward took place on 22 May 1989 when the European Community adopted a resolution concerning the schooling of Gypsy and itinerant children. Studies initiated by these institutions revealed striking correlations, more especially between the absence of compulsory schooling and the demand for education. Such other parameters as the teaching language gave no grounds for generalization and a pragmatic approach was essential.

24. The situation and the action taken with regard to the schooling of Gypsy children in Hungary were discussed by Mr. Varnagy. Gypsies constituted 5 per cent of the country's population. They were previously sedentary but given current political developments semi-nomadization could be expected in the future. There were no special classes for Gypsies except in the first year on account of linguistic difficulties. As far as pedagogy was concerned, a new concept was at present taking shape which encouraged an intercultural education combining the national culture and Gypsy culture. The role of head teachers was vital in promoting interculturalism.

25. Also at European level, Mr. Knaepkens addressed the meeting on behalf of EFECOT (European Federation for the Education of the Children of Occupational Travellers), an Association aimed at promoting schooling for children of boatmen, bargemen and fairground and circus employees. Action for the benefit of this group acquired legal standing through a resolution adopted on 22 May 1989 by the Ministers of education of the European Community. Mr. Knaepkens described a successful experiment in the Netherlands where pre-school facilities took the form of "temporary classes" attended by children when their boat was berthed and awaiting departure. The children's interest was stimulated by active teaching methods and follow-up action from one of these classes to another was ensured through the provision of an individual register. A mobile monitor was available to those children whose constant moves prohibited attendance in the classes. The aim, however, was to encompass all educational components : parent instruction, teacher training and adaptation of curricula.

26. In a similar connexion, Mr. Delattre, Departmental Inspector, outlined the action and projects of the French educational system concerning the schooling of children of families engaged in inland water transport, more especially at Conflans-Sainte-Honorine. Given that pre-school education lessened the likelihood of school failure, a "pre-school reception class" had been instituted on the Netherlands pattern. In order to avoid segregation, this class embodied a novel feature in that it encouraged contact between other infant schools and sought to involve families. A project

currently under way was preparing teaching aids so that parents could follow their children's education by means of audio cassettes and booklets. Other organisms and associations were collaborating in this project.

Mr. Derycke, himself connected with designing the theoretical aspect of the project and the adult education training component, supplemented the previous statement by indicating certain linguistic phenomena, particularly prevalent among those engaged in inland water navigation, which tended to give rise to school failure. He emphasised the need for specific training of teachers and for collaboration between those involved in the educational field, including research workers.

27. Mr. Norovyn Purey Dagva stated that in Mongolia all school-age children of pastoralists and nomads could attend boarding schools. There was a system of compulsory education at the incomplete secondary level. It was, however, difficult to provide teaching for children in large boarding schools. Moreover, the children of pastoralists had no wish to take up their parents' occupation. In the absence of continuing education and follow-up action, the skills acquired could be lost. A project was currently being examined for education of pastoralists and would be submitted to Unesco.

28. The various contributions to the plenary session were summed up by Miss Isabelle Deblé, Chairperson of the Educational Committee of the French National Commission for Unesco.

This initial Unesco meeting confirmed the Organization's anxiety to investigate the problems involved so as to combat exclusion from education. Certain specific experiences could be noted but there were few valid studies. It was therefore desirable to promote the collection of data, and specifically, a census-taking of mobile populations under the aegis of the United Nations. With regard to educational policies, there were still questions to be answered concerning concertation with the mobile populations and the possibilities for adaptation, as well as the transition from macro to micro-planning. Answers would doubtless be more readily found if it were recognized that a given country comprises a variety of populations. In addition to these general issues there were interconnected problems which, on the one hand, related to research and its utilization by decision-makers and those actively involved and, on the other, to consideration of the community element as a socially structured organism. Finally, educational action should be integrated into the whole complex by which it was conditioned, from the economy to health, within the context of a social project. Mobile populations had a life pattern which had to be taken into account.

PART II : MINUTES OF THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

A. FRENCH-LANGUAGE GROUP

29. The discussions in the French-language workshop were based on experiences and research in eight countries. Most were of a national character except in the case of a French association working with and for Gypsy populations and the contribution of a consultant with the European communities. The latter outlined the position of Member States and the decisions resulting from a resolution concerning the schooling of Gypsy children and the children of other itinerant populations.

30. The valuable analyses of four Sahelian African states stressed the specific nature of the problems confronting them but likewise revealed that the difficulties examined by the participants as a whole had a number of points in common.

31. To begin with, the observations made suggested that the situation of itinerant social groups was evolving and that the insufficiently understood historical context was shifting towards new forms made necessary by climatic, political and economic changes.

32. Given this evolutionary process, there was unqualified agreement that it was impossible at present to give figures for the populations concerned although estimates existed which could not easily be contested. It was likewise agreed that the matter should be brought to the attention of international demographic bodies and particularly the United Nations as also of regional and national instances. These should be informed that it was urgent to undertake on a regular basis and at fixed intervals the identification and census of such populations. They were not covered by national procedures in that one of their specific characteristics was to shift across frontiers.

33. The proportion of mobile populations in the overall populations of the countries concerned was similarly uncertain. It would seem to be highest in the Sahelian African countries in respect of nomads from clearly defined ethnic groups (Peul, Tuareg and Tubu in Niger; Moorish, white and black Tamashek in Mali; Tubu, Guran and Arab in Chad; Pullo, Soninké, Wolof, Znaga and Arab in Mauritania), then in Hungary (Gypsies), Spain (Gypsies) and France (Gypsies together with the children of fairground employees and families engaged in inland water navigation).

34. Nomadism and itineracy took a variety of different forms : structural nomadism linked to social organization and the division of territory, seasonal nomadism linked to the search for work at specific periods in order to survive, nomadism in respect of values for those who had been forced to become sedentary for political or economic reasons but who rejoined

the groups to which they originally belonged on the occasion of symbolic gatherings of a cultural and organizational kind.

35. The commonest patterns were those arising from economic necessity : for example, movements in time and space in June to look for pastureland north of the Sahara and return southwards in October since the question of livestock was paramount; in Spain, both Gypsies and non-Gypsies were mobile for periods of between 3 and 7/8 months depending on seasonal crops; more regular movements by boatmen and bargemen, etc. The itineraries followed were fairly well known and the semi-nomadic and sedentarization process were frequently connected with crises occasioned by drought or the disappearance of livestock.

36. On the other hand, social relationships in mobile groups, possible intermarriage with the sedentary population (non-existent, in certain cases), demographic behaviour patterns and methods of social regulation, dietary habits, reference to an authority within the group, cultural and religious values, etc., were aspects only known through specific ethno-sociological studies or through observable transformations, e.g. the splitting up of a group for reasons of survival (part of the group remaining behind while the men and adolescents moved away with the herds), concertation with the authorities to obtain right of passage in cultivated areas, well-drilling, etc.

37. Little information was available concerning the factors determining such transformations. Who makes the decisions ? Who consults with teachers in the Koranic schools ? What nomad girls marry sedentary males ? What stratum of nomadic society will enter a given category of employment in the modern sector ? For what reason ? How are the dominant groups evolving ?

38. How is the need to travel reconciled with the need to accept employment in Spain, France and Hungary ? How is the problem of space resolved ? Legal provisions for suitable stopping-places for Gypsy caravans in each French commune or for offering adequate accomodation to seasonal workers in France were either non-existent or disregarded. The juridical aspect of these problems called for close attention.

39. There was likewise a profound ignorance in the linguistic area. Some languages had their own alphabet, e.g. Arabic or Tamashek (Tiphinar characters), others used the Latin alphabet, while many were purely oral and no collection had been made of their stories and songs.

40. This series of observations should concentrate on those with whom the present meeting of specialists was concerned, namely children in their relation to school education.

41. Few of those in the examples cited were attending school, the situation of girls was rarely mentioned, and the role of different members of the family cell was little known.

42. Examples of the relations in school specific to itinerant life were rare. Education was almost invariably provided in a fixed structure with two variants : nomad children kept to themselves in the canteens and boarding establishments or, given settled lodgings, they attended schools belonging to the system of the country concerned. This applied to the Sahelian countries and to the French schools for children of boatmen and bargemen. When sedentarized, they attended general schools (the Gypsies in Hungary and Spain) but never in great numbers and rarely going on to secondary or higher education. Interesting experiences derived from more complete structures involving the association of adults and young people from the group, social services, and educators using more flexible reception and instruction methods.

43. It was frequently observed that once children of mobile parents were enrolled, their chances of success were excellent, even if no figures were given. Shorter, incomplete schooling sometimes offered as much, if not more, likelihood of success than in the case of sedentary children, as though certain unknown factors offset the specific circumstances of itinerant children.

44. Conversely, it was also frequently observed that Gypsy and nomad children were commonly rejected and that such children, like their parents, generally showed little desire for schooling, underrated the skills transmitted by the school, questioned the attitudes it inculcated, and were aware that it was ill-adapted to their needs.

45. As noted, unsatisfied and unexpressed needs existed, but mention was often made of "demand" where compulsion was not standard.

In the Sahelian countries, several cases were mentioned, frequently in connexion with the transitional situation :

- where families received aid for their economic advantage (whether in the form of fodder for their livestock, improvements to the routes taken, provision of wells or pumps) they became aware of the value of instruction to enable their children to acquire knowledge and skills and were ready to contribute to the financing of schools and boarding establishments by undertaking all or part of the construction and/or the provision of meat;

- the role played by teachers in Koranic schools for children or adults was frequently mentioned although it was not clear in what way they were supported by families or in what conditions they lodged and taught young people. It was observed that success was often met with children who had attended a Koranic school between the ages of 4 and 10 before enrolling in an ordinary school. The part played by the Koranic teacher as an intermediary between the two types of school required clarification.

46. The pattern of "development operations/school construction" would be acceptable if the latter was effective. School facilities were limited in the countries represented and they were anxious for nomad children to benefit from the right to education. It was obvious, however, that any action along those lines implied additional expenditure and that this should be analysed.

The same applied to approaches adopted in France, and possibly Spain, designed to institute appropriate and effective arrangements for the schooling of itinerant children (identification and follow-up registers for children of seasonal workers in Spain).

47. These observations clearly demonstrated that it would be difficult to initiate a specific project unless the authorities had a definite educational policy.

Concertation between many of those involved was therefore essential. International encouragement was a stimulus and a clearly defined project at national level was an initial outcome. Participants emphasized, however, the many limiting factors encountered and the overriding necessity for compatibility between economic development and educational development, on the one hand, and between the global and the specific project, on the other. Unduly specific action on behalf of itinerant children could contribute to their further marginalization or even exclusion. Assimilation, however, did not lead to fundamental integration and adherence. Exemples were cited in respect of both formulations.

48. Despite generous affirmations, there was little reciprocal information between the standards of the majority and minority cultures. Mutual recognition could only be provided by those in a position to encourage communication. Where the activities of nomad pastoralists contributed on a not insignificant scale to the national income, they possessed both a springboard and a lever. Where the difference was of another kind, the sharing of skills was more difficult.

49. Teacher training and the preparation of textbooks and methods should accordingly be aimed at disseminating the culture of both parties and at emphasizing whatever went to make up a country's identity in all its diversity.

50. Pedagogic research should seek to introduce diversification after a common core and to adapt action to the relation between the child and the family environment. The administrative authorities should seek for ways of allocating specific tasks to teachers through various measures. The different participants illustrated these points by several concrete examples.

51. Doubts were expressed as to the possibility of reducing the ambivalence between recognition of specific interests and insertion into global society but there was complete agreement

as to the contribution which such a meeting as the present one could make towards solving an unacceptable problem of discrimination.

52. THE PARTICIPANTS :

- express their appreciation of Unesco's initiative,
- adopt the following suggestions :
  - that Unesco request the United Nations to undertake a periodic demographic census of mobile populations according to the customary norms by sex, age group and ethnic identity;
  - that Unesco request Member States to provide the Office of Educational Statistics with the maximum data concerning school enrolment of children of mobile populations;

    that Unesco intensify exchanges of views and experiences in this field with international and regional organizations, with NGOs and with national institutions;
  - that Unesco encourage comparative research concerning sedentary and nomad populations, more especially in co-operation with UNFPA;
  - That Unesco, in conjunction with FAO, WHO, IBE, UNICEF and WFP, consider undertaking intersectorial surveys to provide a basis for launching concerted operations;
  - that Unesco assist in assembling studies conducted at national and regional levels so as to constitute an ad hoc network of documentation;
  - that Unesco, with the assistance of university workers, undertake research aimed at the identification of needs and demands among mobile populations respecting their children's access to education;
  - that Unesco give its support to all forms of university co-operation with a view to an improved understanding of such populations and of their values and expectations, and a sensibilization of teachers in the practice of mutual recognition of various national communities;
  - that Unesco encourage studies aimed at a better understanding of the relation between Koranic studies and national schools when this is of a nature to develop access to education on the part of children of mobile populations;

- that participants undertake to publicize the seminar's conclusions and proposals in their respective countries, to stimulate comparative studies on educational conditions (access, success, further studies) concerning children of mobile and sedentary populations and to encourage research on ways of ensuring the participation of mobile populations in future educational projects.

B - ANGLOPHONE GROUP

53. The education of the children of nomadic, migrant and itinerant groups has been considered a major problem needing the attention and consideration of governments and national and international organizations. It is the firm belief that, without a prompt consideration of this problem, at a time when other children of sedentary groups are advancing in science and technology, the children of mobile groups will be marginalized for lack of adequate preparation to cope with the changes of the future. This will create an impediment to them and to others.

54. The nature of considerations given to their education and training will be influenced by the philosophical stance of any given nation which will specify the cultural, economic and political conditions in which the various groups will operate. However, it is important to note that, after due consideration of the conditions governing the education of nomads in various nations, it has been observed that the various nomadic and mobile groups are strongly attached to their rich culture and feel that they have something to contribute to other cultures. They must, therefore, be encouraged to enrich their culture and those of others through policies which recognize their distinctiveness and provide the means to encourage them to contribute to national and international cultural exchanges and/or interactions. Unless these problems are addressed attempts to promote acceptable educational systems for children of mobile populations will always be limited.

55. A review of the necessary conditions for an effective and relevant schooling of the different categories of nomadic children, from the point of view of equality of education and from the point of view of access to education. With regard to the necessary conditions, they must be related to the following "keypoints" :

- the nomadic children
- the nomadic parents
- the nomadic communities
- the teachers
- the curricula
- the resources (teaching materials, infrastructures, finances, management).

56. In view of formulating conclusions and suggestions, the various questions that are raised during the plenary session has been linked to the above summed up keypoints.

Reference framework for the discussions

(i) The information given by the various participants in the documents and during the plenary session.

(ii) The working document by J.C. Pauvert :

- knowledge of the problems ?
- need for specific measures ?
- an educational draft/design
- cooperation (sub-regional/regional; international; role played by non-governmental organizations).

57. The problems of educating nomads and information gathering demographic data :

- number of nomadic groups according to age, sex and cluster/clan groups
- living conditions for adults and children
- economic conditions
- social conditions
- child and parents.

58. Identification of needs and demands for education of nomads :

- expectation of parents, children and development/change agents from education now and for the future
- attitudes towards education
- settlement and other welfare schemes.

59. Educational designs for nomads :

a) Policy

Objectives - short and long-term

- consideration of cultural elements
- consideration of economic and political elements
- consideration of relationships with other ethnic groups
- levels and types of schooling

i) pre-school
ii) primary
iii) adult

b) Contents

- cultural contents
- cross-cultural contents
- methods of teaching.

c) Resources

(i) Personnel

- Teachers
- Supervisors
- Administrators

(ii) Infrastructures

- Fixed structures - classrooms
- Mobile structures
- Teaching support - electronic, books, chalkboards, etc.
- Health facilities

a) human
b) animal

(iii) Financial resources

- Budgetary allocation by

a) national governments
b) international agencies
c) nomads
d) NGOS

d) Management

- Location of nomadic schools

- i. Various school approaches

- regular
- on-site
- mobile
- distance

- ii. Coordination of school activities

- communication
- involvement of parents
- involvement of teachers
- involvement of children (child-to-child)

60. Cooperation in the education of nomads

i. National cooperation

- between states/provinces/districts
- between various national agencies and organizations.

ii. International cooperation

- regional cooperation
- international organizations
- north/south cooperation
- purpose and nature of cooperation.

61. Linking the questions of the general meeting with the conditional keypoints

(a) The nomadic children

- From what age is a boarding school advisable for children ?
- What are their conditions of life ?
- How is the sex distributions in the enrolment ?
- Are the children losing their cultural values ? (in relation with a boarding school system) ?
- What about the relationship (the interaction) between teachers and children ?
- Is there information with regard to the participation of the girls' education ?
- What about the performance within the school system ?
- What is - in the long term - the expected future of the nomadic children ?
- What is the role of the children in their own education ?
- How to take into account the importance of the pre-school education - especially with regard to the total development of the personality.

(b) The nomadic parents

- What are the expectations of the parents with regard to the future of their children ?
- What are the motivations of the parents to their children's participation in schooling. What is the parent's attitude with regard to the education of their children ?
- Are there specific actions with regard to the schooling of parents ? Is there a follow-up with regard to women's education ?
- Are parents consulted by the government in the education of nomadic children ?
- How would parents be supported in their participation in teaching ?
- Do parents want to settle down ? What's the impact of settling down these families ?
- What is the educational level of the parents ?

(c) The nomadic communities

- Is there a need for integration into the national life ?
- Are those communities involved in the education ?

- How do we get a picture of the movements of these communities (numbers, routes...)
- What are the governmental policies with regard to - on the long term - permanent settlement/mobility ?
- How is the relationship between the nomadic communities and the sedentary communities ?
- How do we categorize the various nomadic populations (in relation with their movements, etc.) ?
- What could be the professional activities of the gypsies in the future ? How do they adopt new professional activities ?
- Are there "inter-marriages" ?

(d) The teachers

- What about teachers belonging to the nomadic populations ?
- What knowledge do teachers have about the nomadic life ?
- Are there language problems ? Solutions ?
- Is there any provision for a special training for teachers of nomadic children ?
- What about the children/teacher issue ?
- Is there a need for measures with regard to the encouragement of teachers ?

(e) The curricula

- What must be the nature/the type of this curricula ?
- What about the teaching methods ?
- Is it possible to incorporate in Koranic schools the teaching of general skills ?

(f) The resources

(i) Teaching materials

- How to realize uniformity and adequacy with regard to materials used and teaching methods at the regional/national levels with a view to achieving continuity in the education of nomads ?

(ii) Infrastructures

- What are the conditions with regard to an option for a mobile and/or fixed school structure ?

(iii) Finances

- What about budgetary allocations for nomadic education ?
- What is the financial contribution of governments, organizations and parents to the education of nomads ?

(iv) Management

- Is it possible to coordinate the education of various nomadic groups ?
- What about school location issues ?
- What is the present state of communication network(s) ?
- What are the present distance teaching problems ?

62. Conclusions and suggestions with regard to the knowledge of the nomadic children

(a) Within the European Council Member States there are already some reliable data and information available. In the African countries, the situation is not even. Some countries have made efforts to obtain statistical data, some other countries have to start data collection. The data available in some other countries needs to be updated or complemented. There is need for a general international policy for the collection of data. This is necessary to ensure researches at national and international levels and to establish an international data bank on the conditions governing the education of nomads, for dissemination of information, for proper planning and implementation of their education projects.

(b) The situation with regard to the knowledge of the conditions of life is similar to what is stated above in (a). It is uneven, non existent or poor.

(c) With regard to the sex distribution in the enrolment, it could be stated that in the European Council Member States education is compulsory for boys as well as for girls. In Africa, compulsory education cannot be easily introduced. The corrections, however, should be based on the knowledge of the cultural patterns of the people and it has to be country specific.

(d) With regard to the eventual loss of their cultural values, we have to know more about the cultural values of the various nomadic peoples. It is possible to draw the advantages of modern education and the cultural values of nomadic populations for planning acceptable educational systems.

(e) The teachers have to make a clear distinction between professional teaching skills and the knowledge and understanding of the children's environment. Therefore, systematic contacts with the parents are necessary. We here refer even to the question with regard to teachers from the nomadic population.

(f) It is necessary to encourage parents with regard to the participation of the girls at schooling. The schooling systems have to take into account the skill areas that will enable girls to deal with their daily problems, as well as with achieving self-fulfilment.

(g) With regard to the performance within the school system, there is need for an evaluation system. This evaluation has to include criteria pertinent to local conditions and particular objectives which are relevant to the tools of action available in the various countries.

(h) Pre-school education is very important with regard to social care and socialisation of the child. In the European Council countries, the demand for pre-school education is very high, although it is not compulsory. The participation of nomadic children, however, is very low. In African countries pre-school education of nomadic children is almost non-existent.

(i) At present, most governments do not provide specific vocational training for nomads to fit in their parents' occupation. In recent years this situation is being corrected by some governments through policy initiatives (Kenya, Nigeria...). These initiatives need to be encouraged. It is, of course, understood that nomads are informally trained for their occupations. The whole situation may be determined by national integration policies.

63. Conclusions and suggestions with regard to the parents

(a) In the European Council countries most parents encourage their children to participate in schooling at the various educational levels. Nomadic populations are accepting education as a means of developing skills and acquiring knowledge. They insist that education should encourage cultural and mutual understanding of various cultures in a nation. There is a need to encourage through policy development, cultural and mutual understanding as well as providing opportunities for diversifying the expectations in literacy programmes.

(b) Steps should be taken at different levels of cooperation to enable parents to get involved in the conception, planning, implementation, management and evaluation of the education of their children.

(c) There is a need for legal provision to enable nomads to settle down where necessary - temporarily or permanently - according to the local conditions.

64. Conclusions with regard to the nomadic communities

Integration should mean for nomads the participation in decision-making, policy formulation and implementation in cultural, social, economic and political matters of the nations in which the various groups live. To this end education should provide them with access to modern knowledge.

65. Conclusions with regard to teachers

(a) Teachers must be knowledgeable in the culture of nomadic peoples and curricula contents. Preference should be given to nomads in the recrutment of teachers.

(b) Teachers should be guaranteed initial training, in-service training, tenure, prospects, motivation and special incentives.

66. Conclusions with regard to curricula

(a) The curricula should incorporate modern knowledge and the knowledge of the culture of the nomads.

(b) Account should be taken of the nomads' traditional methods of teaching children.

(c) Modern knowledge should be incorporated into the Koranic education.

67. Conclusions with regard to resources

(a) Infrastructures may not present serious problems. In fact, they may be less costly. But provision of funds for health services, water supply, durable teaching materials, teachers' salaries, communication equipment is the source of the major problems.

(b) There is a need for national and international financial support for the provision of material resources.

(c) Management should be based on the cooperation between governments and the nomadic peoplesand operated by the nationals. However, financial support may be sought for such as : transportation, office equipment, communication networks, health facilities and food supplements.

68. Conclusions with regard to cooperation

The nomadic populations have been almost overlooked in national development planning for many years. As minorities, they cannot by themselves deal with development problems confronting them. The governments (especially in developing countries) already have problems in providing adequate and quality education for children of sedentary populations let alone for nomads. Therefore, there is a need for international cooperation in the following fields : research, financial resources, technical assistance and support services to solve problems relating to water supply, health, education, etc. The levels for cooperation - see following table :

Financial Sources	Research	Resources	Technical Assistance	Support Services
National	X	X	X	X
UN systems	X	X	X	X
Bilateral	X	X	X	X
South-South	X	-	X	-
NGOs	X	-	X	-
Religious Institutions	-	-	X	X
Associations	X		X	X
Foundations	X	X	X	-

PART IV : EVALUATION OF THE MEETING

69. A process of auto-evaluation (cf. attached form in Annex 3) enabled the results of the meeting to be appraised.

(a) Unanimous approval was given to the notion of assembling in a single meeting national and international specialists on matters connected with such diversified itinerant groups as nomads, Gypsies, boatmen and bargemen, seasonal workers, etc. A number of participants stressed the importance of this approach and considered the profitable exchange of experiences and information to be of value.

(b) The meeting's objectives as set out in the document relating to terms of reference were deemed clear and realistic. Participants felt that the meeting had duly carried out its assigned task. Two participants, however, would have preferred the objectives to be less comprehensive and to deal with more specific issues, although this would not have been possible in a preliminary meeting of this kind. Subsequent meetings will obviously concentrate on less general themes.

(c) All participants appreciated the working document (ED/C/15/INF.3), and especially its analysis of the problem and the pertinence of the questions raised. With regard to the other documents distributed (mainly the national studies), some participants regretted that they were not available in their working languages (English or French). Others suggested that a summary be made of each document; this will be done in due course and the summaries distributed in two languages.

(d) Independently of the interpretation of the plenary sessions, some participants (more especially, English-speaking participants) would have liked closer social contacts between the two linguistic groups.

(e) Generally speaking, the results of the meeting were considered positive and encouraging.

Attached, in Annex 3, a specimen of the form distributed to participants for the purpose of auto-evaluation.

Annex 1

Commission française pour l'Unesco

Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO)

Réunion de spécialistes nationaux sur les conditions de scolarisation des enfants de populations nomades

Meeting of national education experts on schooling conditions for children of nomadic populations

Conflans-Sainte-Honorine (France)
10 - 16 septembre 1989

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS / LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Spécialistes nationaux / National experts

M. Jesus ARZUBIALDE
Avenida de Madrid, 84
26006 Logrono
La Rioja
ESPAGNE

Melle Isabelle DEBLE
Universitaire
Présidente du Comité de l'éducation de la Commission française pour l'Unesco
15 rue Saint-Exupéry
94800 Villejuif
FRANCE

M. Jean-Paul DELATTRE
Inspecteur départemental de l'enseignement primaire
Centre de formation des IDEN
96 Bd Bessières
75017 Paris
FRANCE

M. Marc DERYCKE
Chercheur psycholinguiste
91 rue J.B. Lamarck
78700 - CONFLANS-SAINTE-HONORINE
FRANCE

M. Abdallah Ould EL WALED
Chef du service de l'enseignement
à la direction de l'enseignement fondamental
Ministère de l'éducation nationale
B.P. 227
Nouakchott
MAURITANIE

M. C. EZEOMAH
Nomadic Education Unit
University of Jos
P.M.B. 2084
Jos
NIGERIA

Mme Martha LLANOS
Los Castanos 240
San Isidro
Lima 27
PEROU

M. Ada MAHAMANE
Secrétaire général adjoint
Ministère de l'éducation nationale
B.P. 557
Niamey
NIGER

M. Choukou El Hadj MAHAMAT
Centre Régional de formation continue
Du Kanem MAO
TCHAD

M. Soumana Mamadou MAIGA
Inspecteur de l'enseignement fondamental
GAO
MALI

M. J.B. NDUNG'U
Deputy Permanent Secretary
Ministère de l'éducation
B.P. Box 30040
Nairobi
KENYA

M. Norovyn PUREY DAGVA
Division de l'éducation des travailleurs
Ministère de l'éducation
Oulan Bator
MONGOLIE

M. Mohamed El Hassan TAHA
Rechearch Centre
Institute of Education, National Educational
BAKHT ER RUDA
SOUDAN

M. Elemer VARNAGY
Université Janus Pannonius
7624 Pecs Sallai Imre u. 42
HONGRIE

Consultants

M. Ludo KNAEPKENS
E.F.E.C.O.T.
rue de l'Industrie 42/10
1040 Bruxelles
BELGIQUE

M. Jean-Pierre LIEGEOIS
Hameau de Thurissey
71260 Lugny
FRANCE

M. Jean-Claude PAUVERT
Domaine du Guilhebeau Margueron
33220 Sainte-Foy-La-Grande
FRANCE

Observateurs / Observers

Association pour l'aide à la scolarisation des enfants tziganes et autres jeunes en difficulté (ASET)
65 rue du chateau
92100 Boulogne
FRANCE

UNESCO

M. G. KOUTCHERENKO
Chef de la Division de l'enseignement primaire, de l'alphabétisation, de l'éducation dans les zones rurales et de l'éducation des adultes

M. Ali HAMADACHE
Section enseignement primaire
Division ED/PLA
7 place Fontenoy
75700 Paris
FRANCE

M. A. TAY
Programme de coopération UNESCO/UNICEF
7 place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris
FRANCE

Mme Ginette MOSZKOWICZ
Secrétaire

Institut International de Planification de l'Education /
International Institute for Educational Planning

M. Mathias RWERA
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix
75016 Paris
FRANCE

Commission Française pour l'UNESCO /
French Commission for UNESCO

M. Yves BRUNSVICK
Secrétaire général
42 avenue Raymond Poincaré
75016 Paris
FRANCE

M. Jérôme HELIE
Conseiller technique

M. Jean-Pierre REGNIER
Conseiller technique
Organisateur de la réunion

Responsables Locaux de l'Organisation de la Réunion /
Meeting Organisation

M. Bernard LAMBIN
Directeur de l'Ecole régionale de "la Batellerie"
rue Désiré Foucher
78700 Conflans-Sainte-Honorine
FRANCE

M. André VIOLA
Directeur du Lycée Professionnel

BEST COPY AVAILABLE